

# Trainer Orientation

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## Introduction

### Background

Leaders in the therapeutic community (TC) model of treatment have identified a critical need for entry-level staff training in the basics of the TC model.<sup>1</sup> In response, the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment (CSAT) convened an expert panel in 2000 to serve as a planning committee for a generic TC curriculum (TCC) and to provide guidance during its development (see appendix C for a list of expert panel members and appendix D for a list of all other contributors). This document is the result of that collaboration.

TCs have evolved to serve an ever-increasing range of special populations with substance use disorders, including women with children, older adults, adolescents, people with co-occurring mental disorders, people with HIV/AIDS, people who are homeless, and people involved with the criminal justice system. In addition, the TC approach has been passed down rather informally through succeeding generations of TC program staff, allowing a shift away from the foundations of the TC model<sup>2</sup> and necessitating a concrete and standardized method of training both clinical and nonclinical staff.

In an interview with *Therapeutic Communities of America News*, the Director of CSAT, H. Westley Clark, M.D., J.D., M.P.H., CAS, FASAM, advised that, as the TC model continues to evolve, TC practitioners and administrators should stay anchored to the essential premises of TCs so that changes are based on “your [TC practitioners'] own information, your own traditions, your own histories so you don't get fads . . . [but] progressions that are logical, sustained, and meaningful.”<sup>3</sup>

This TCC was developed to facilitate such logical and meaningful evolution of the TC model by providing TC staff members with an understanding of the essential components and methods of the TC and helping them understand and appreciate that they are part of a long tradition of *community* as a method of treatment.

### Audience

The primary audience for the TCC is TC employees, both clinical and nonclinical staff members, working in a TC setting for the first time. TCC consultants strongly recommend that you also include experienced staff members in the training. Including both experienced and new staff members will build your training community and enhance learning by incorporating TC elements of role modeling and mutual self-help into the training process. The TCC will provide staff members with a beneficial review and ensure that they understand fundamental TC concepts and practices.

## **Trainers**

Only experienced trainers who are familiar with the TC treatment model should present the TCC. Trainers must be able to address issues that will arise in the training community in a manner that is safe and consistent with TC methods and principles. In addition, trainers experienced in the TC model can enrich the training experience by using examples and case descriptions from their own practices.

## **Language**

In presenting generic TC concepts and methods, TCC developers use terms that are accepted widely in TCs. In some cases, several alternative terms (provided by TCC reviewers) are included. You may find that your TC uses terms that differ from those used in the TCC, and you will need to adjust your presentation accordingly.

Although the number of outpatient programs using the TC model is increasing, most TC programs remain residential. For this reason, developers use the word “resident” throughout the document rather than TC “participant,” “member,” or “client.”

## **TCC Goals and Objectives**

### **Goals:**

- To provide a common knowledge base for all staff members working in TCs
- To encourage training participants to work on their professional growth and development.

**Objectives:** Participants who complete the TCC will

- Understand and be able to explain
  - The history, basic concepts, and components of the TC
  - The TC views of the disorder, the person, recovery, and right living
  - The social structure and physical environment of the TC
  - The TC treatment methods
  - The ways in which staff members help residents change their behavior, attitudes, and self-identity through the community-as-method and the self-help and mutual self-help learning processes
  - The expectations, roles, and competencies of all staff members
- Experience increased self-awareness
- Be able to identify concerns about their roles and ways to obtain additional information, support, or training
- Experience and understand the TC process through participation in simulations and role plays of TC methods
- Experience an enhanced sense of belonging to a TC.

## The TCC Package

The TCC package includes a Trainer's Manual, a Participant's Manual that can be photocopied for each training participant, and a CD-ROM with PowerPoint slides. Black-and-white hardcopies of the slides are included at the end of each module; however, you also can print color slides from the CD to make overhead transparencies or use the CD to create your own PowerPoint presentation.

## The TCC Learning Approach

The TCC comprises 11 modules designed to allow for flexible delivery schedules. The full curriculum can be delivered over several consecutive days or can be offered over the course of several weeks or months. Each module also can be used separately to target a specific training need. The TCC learning approach includes

- A mixture of presentations, discussions, and exercises to simulate the self-help and mutual self-help learning processes used in TCs
- Frequent use of a static small-group exercise format
- Time for participants to reflect on and write their thoughts and feelings in personal journals
- An assessment of learning to be completed by participants in their small groups at the end of each session.

You may want to incorporate two videos into the TCC, both produced by and available from the CSAT-funded Mid-America Addiction Technology Transfer Center ([www.mattc.org](http://www.mattc.org)):

- *Therapeutic Community: History and Overview*, narrated by David Deitch, Ph.D. (1 hour, 45 minutes), provides an overview of the history and evolution of the TC and introduces the TC model (\$40, order #V01).
- *Therapeutic Community: Theory and Research*, narrated by George De Leon, Ph.D. (41 minutes), presents the theoretical foundation and research associated with the TC model (\$20, order #V02).

The TCC is not an immersion approach but can be used to complement an agency's immersion training. *It is important that trainers ensure that participants know to expect a training that is, while highly interactive, more didactic than the immersion training they may have experienced.* It is up to you to provide break time as needed to accommodate those who may not be accustomed to a more didactic format.

You may want to incorporate more TC process into the training, particularly if you are presenting the TCC over several consecutive days. For example, the TC morning meeting is introduced in Module 5; you can incorporate a morning meeting into each training day after that or introduce the morning meeting earlier in the training and use one each day thereafter. Of course, you would need to adjust the timeline accordingly. In addition, you can introduce the techniques of pullups and pushups in Module 1 and encourage training participants to use them throughout the training.

You should keep in mind that, although the TCC is not immersion training, experiential exercises and group simulations may trigger emotional responses in trainees. You should inform participants of this possibility and give them options if they need help coping with their feelings. These options may include providing a break, talking with a person individually, making sure participants are familiar with their agency's employee assistance program, and so on.

The TCC is designed as an entry-level training to familiarize new staff members with basic TC principles and methods. *It is not intended to take the place of immersion or other clinical skills training or ongoing clinical supervision.*

## **Using the Trainer's Manual**

The Trainer's Manual includes general preparation instructions and two appendices (Ice Breakers and Positive Visualizations) that are applicable to all modules. In addition, each module includes

- Module-specific preparation instructions
- A module overview, including goals and objectives and a content timeline
- The presentation
- Resource Sheets
- A module summary
- A module review (a learning assessment)
- Copies of the overhead slides.

### **Preparation**

#### ***General preparation***

This manual includes Getting Started (page 9), a one-page preparation guide with checklists for

- The Training Space
- Equipment and Materials
- General Preparation.

The preparation information in Getting Started applies to all TCC modules; you should review it before each training day.

#### ***Module-specific preparation***

In addition, each module has a session-specific Preparation Checklist including items such as

- Recommended reference reading. The TCC draws heavily (with the publisher's permission) from *The Therapeutic Community: Theory, Model, and Method* by George De Leon, Ph.D. (Springer Publishing Company, Inc., 2000). The recommended reference reading for each module indicates the chapters on which the module is based and in some cases suggests additional sources.

- Newsprint note preparation.
- Materials (in addition to those listed in Getting Started) needed for the module.

## Module Overview

Following the preparation checklist in each module, you will find

- Goals and objectives for the module
- A chart showing the module content and timeline.






The timeline is an estimate based on the pilot test of the TCC and is included to help you plan the training. *Actual times will vary depending on the size and participation level of your training group.* You also may need to divide longer modules into two parts to present on 2 days. The timeline indicates logical break times; these breaks are not indicated in the presentation section to allow flexibility in your schedule.



You may want to spend more or less time than is indicated on a particular topic, based on the learning needs of your trainees. Using the estimated timeline, you can develop an agenda that will meet the needs of your training group.

## Presentation

The presentation section of each module is in a two-column format. The right column contains detailed presentation and exercise instructions and content. Topic heads are designed to help you keep your place in the manual. The presentation contains all necessary content and includes examples where appropriate. Adding your own examples will enrich the training experience.

The left column contains icons that offer visual cues.

ICON	INDICATES
 <b>xx minutes</b>	The approximate time allotted for the section.
	You will be referring participants to their Participant's Manuals.
	You will be using newsprint.
	You will be referring participants to their personal journals.
	You will be facilitating a small-group exercise.

ICON	INDICATES
	You will be facilitating a two-person exercise.
 <b>OH #x-x</b>	You will be using an overhead or PowerPoint slide. The number of the slide is indicated below the icon.

You also will find trainer notes throughout that offer alternatives to consider.

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*Trainer notes look like this.*

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Module 1, Introduction to the Therapeutic Community Curriculum, includes a welcome, instructions to summarize your background as it relates to TCs, and instructions to request that participants introduce themselves and say one or two sentences about their backgrounds. However, because the TCC modules can be used as stand-alone sessions, be presented over consecutive days, or be presented over several weeks or months, you may not need welcome and introduction cues in every session. Therefore, to avoid redundancy, modules 2 through 11 begin with introducing the module contents. It is assumed that you, as a trainer, will welcome participants, conduct introductions, and provide ice-breaking exercises (see appendix A for suggestions) as appropriate.

## Resource Sheets

Resource Sheets at the back of each module include background information, case studies, and instructions for exercises. You should pull these resource sheets out of the book before beginning the training so they are readily available to you for reference.

## Module Summary

The module summary is provided as a quick overview for the trainer and as a take-home overview for the participant.

## Summary, Reflection, and Module Review

Each session concludes with a summary of main points, time for journal writing, a small-group learning review and assessment, and a wrapup to help participants on a positive note.

## Pework

Each session specifies a prework assignment related to the next session. If you are presenting the TCC as a multiday training over consecutive days or in a series over several weeks or months, prework assignments can help trainees prepare for the next session and maximize training time. If you are presenting modules back-to-back, you obviously will disregard prework assignments.

## Overview of the Participant's Manual

The Participant's Manual includes

- A Participant Orientation
- The overhead slides printed three to a page with space for participants to write notes
- A module review
- A module summary
- Resource Sheets.

You will need to photocopy the Participant's Manual for each course participant.

Note: The Participant's Manual does not include the journal required for course participants. You should provide spiral-bound notebooks to all participants for use as journals.

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<sup>1</sup> De Leon, G. *Therapeutic Communities: Theory, Model and Method*. New York: Springer Publishing Company, Inc., 2000. Chapter 1, page 6.

<sup>2</sup> De Leon, G. *Therapeutic Communities: Theory, Model and Method*. New York: Springer Publishing Company, Inc., 2000. Chapter 1, page 6.

<sup>3</sup> Therapeutic communities and high functioning: An interview with Dr. H. Westley Clark, Director of the Center for Substance Abuse Treatment. *Therapeutic Communities of America News*, Spring/Summer 1999.





# Getting Started

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This section provides details for presenting the TCC modules; review this list before presenting a module. Session-specific information is in the Preparation Checklist for each module.

## The Training Space

- ☐ Arrange participant seating for each session in a way you find most comfortable, keeping in mind that space is needed for both small- and large-group exercises.
- ☐ Prepare a poster of the 14 basic components of a therapeutic community (TC) (see page 2-17). Post it in the training room so that you can refer to it throughout the training.
- ☐ Prepare a large structure board (see page 1-17) of the format your program uses, and post it in the training room if you assign work assignments to participants.
- ☐ Prepare or find posters with TC slogans, your program's philosophy or mission statement, and so forth, and post them in the training room to enhance the training environment.
- ☐ Create a positive, caring atmosphere by playing instrumental background music as participants are gathering, returning from breaks, and writing in their journals.

## Equipment and Materials

- ☐ Tape or CD player and instrumental background music
- ☐ Overhead/LCD projector and slides
- ☐ Newsprint pads, easel, and crayons or markers
- ☐ Pins, tacks, or tape to post newsprint on walls
- ☐ Participant's Manuals, one for each participant
- ☐ Journals and pens or pencils for each participant

## General Preparation

- ☐ Review the entire curriculum, including the exercises, Resource Sheets, and appendices.
- ☐ Prepare the overhead/PowerPoint slides for each module.
- ☐ Obtain and review the recommended reference material for each module.
- ☐ Photocopy a Participant's Manual for each participant.
- ☐ Obtain a spiral-bound notebook for each participant to use as a personal journal, along with a supply of pens or pencils.
- ☐ Obtain a copy of your TC's new-resident orientation packet for each participant.
- ☐ Obtain a copy of your TC's code of ethics for each participant.
- ☐ Prepare an agenda for the TCC that includes specific days and times for training.
- ☐ Prepare an agenda for each TCC module, including breaks and lunch (see Content and Timeline in each module for guidance).
- ☐ Select an activity (see appendix A and appendix B) to begin each module.
- ☐ Confirm participants and training room arrangements.
- ☐ Assemble and test necessary equipment, materials, and supplies.
- ☐ Have fun!